

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 14.631

described in §§ 1.600 through 1.603 in part 1 of this chapter.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), 5904)

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control numbers 2900-0018 and 2900-0605)

[53 FR 52421, Dec. 28, 1988, as amended at 55 FR 38057, Sept. 17, 1990; 68 FR 8545, Feb. 24, 2003; 71 FR 28586, May 17, 2006; 72 FR 58012, Oct. 12, 2007; 73 FR 29871, May 22, 2008; 73 FR 29871, May 22, 2008]

§ 14.630 Authorization for a particular claim.

(a) Any person may be authorized to prepare, present, and prosecute one claim. A power of attorney executed on VA Form 21-22a, "Appointment of Attorney or Agent as Claimant's Representative," and a statement signed by the person and the claimant that no compensation will be charged or paid for the services, shall be filed with the agency of original jurisdiction where the claim is presented. The power of attorney identifies to VA the claimant's appointment of representation and authorizes VA's disclosure of information to the person representing the claimant.

(b) Representation may be provided by an individual pursuant to this section one time only. An exception to this limitation may be granted by the General Counsel in unusual circumstances. Among the factors which may be considered in determining whether an exception will be granted are:

(1) The number of accredited representatives, agents, and attorneys operating in the claimant's geographic region;

(2) Whether the claimant has unsuccessfully sought representation from other sources;

(3) The nature and status of the claim; and

(4) Whether there exists unique circumstances which would render alternative representation inadequate.

(c) Persons providing representation under this section must comply with the laws administered by VA and with the regulations governing practice before VA including the rules of conduct in § 14.632 of this part.

(d) Persons providing representation under this section are subject to suspension and or exclusion from representation of claimants before VA on the same grounds as apply to representatives, agents, and attorneys in § 14.633 of this part.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), 5903)

[68 FR 8546, Feb. 24, 2003, as amended at 73 FR 29872, May 22, 2008]

§ 14.631 Powers of attorney; disclosure of claimant information.

(a) A power of attorney, executed on either VA Form 21-22, "Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative," or VA Form 21-22a, "Appointment of Attorney or Agent as Claimant's Representative," is required to represent a claimant before VA and to authorize VA's disclosure of information to any person or organization representing a claimant before the Department. Without the signature of a person providing representation for a particular claim under § 14.630 of this part or an accredited veterans service organization representative, agent, or attorney, the appointment is invalid, and the person appointed to provide representation is under no obligation to do so. The power of attorney shall meet the following requirements:

(1) Contain signature by:

(i) The claimant, or

(ii) The claimant's guardian, or

(iii) In the case of an incompetent, minor, or otherwise incapacitated person without a guardian, the following in the order named—spouse, parent, other relative or friend (if interests are not adverse), or the director of the hospital in which the claimant is maintained; and

(iv) An individual providing representation on a particular claim under § 14.630 of this part or an accredited veterans service organization representative, agent, or attorney; and

(2) Shall be presented to the appropriate VA office for filing in the veteran's claims folder.

(b) VA may, for any purpose, treat a power of attorney naming as a claimant's representative an organization recognized under § 14.628, a particular